

WOODRIDGE SCHOOL DISTRICT 68
Administration Office

TO: Dr. Patrick Broncato

FROM: Dr. William Schmidt

SUBJECT: JULY 21, 2025 – DISCUSSION OF BOARD POLICY CHANGES

In most years, our process to review Board policies begins in the winter with an initial review by the Policy Committee (first week of December). The Policy Committee then provides the full Board with recommended policy changes for discussion at the December Board meeting. The Board then approves these recommended policy changes at the January meeting. In some years, we need to make midterm policy changes when there is a time-sensitive, legal requirement to do so. Due to new legislation and a recent U.S. District Court decision, we are required to update our policies and procedures by the start of the 2025-26 school year. All recommended changes are either stricken/ or underlined. Corresponding Administrative Procedures have also been updated. Administrative procedures do not need Board approval, so have not been included.

Policies Impacted Due to the Reinstatement of the 2020 Title IX Regulations

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 was the first law to enshrine protections against sex discrimination in schools and forced many schools to establish equal opportunities for girls and boys in sports and other educational programs. This law applies to any entity that provides educational services while receiving federal funding or assistance.

The U.S. Department of Education sets regulations and rules that provide schools with operational guidance and standard procedures compliant with Title IX law. These rules and regulations have undergone frequent changes over the past four Presidential administrations.

On January 9, 2025, in the case *State of Tennessee v. Cardona*, the U.S. District Court in the Eastern District of Kentucky struck down the 2024 Title IX sex discrimination regulations that took effect on August 1, 2024. The result of this ruling was to restore the 2020 Title IX regulations issued during the first Trump administration. On February 4, 2025, the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights issued a *Dear Colleague* letter in which it confirmed the 2020 Title IX regulations were in effect. Attached to this memo is an amended draft of **Board Policy 7265, Title IX Grievance Procedure**, in response to the court decision.

The major differences between the 2020 and 2024 Title IX Regulations are that the 2020 regulations include: a) a narrower definition of sex-based harassment; b) a more prescriptive grievance procedure and investigative process; and c) exclude protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

Additionally, the return to the 2020 Title IX Regulations impacted other Board policies, and in order to remain compliant, the following policies were also updated. The recommended changes in the following policies have been either stricken/ or underlined in red:

4010 Equal Employment Opportunity and Minority Recruitment

4100 Staff Development

4180 Workplace Harassment Prohibited

5010 Equal Educational Opportunities

5020 Harassment of Students Prohibited

5440 Bullying

5470 Teen Dating Violence

7260 Uniform Grievance Procedure

Ensuring Success in School (ESS) Law

The Ensuring Success in School (ESS) Law, effective July 1, 2025, for the 2025-26 school year, created a new School Code Article 26A. This law requires IL School Boards to adopt policies that address the education and related needs of students who are parents, expectant parents, or victims of domestic or sexual violence. Districts must have procedures and protocols in place so that Article 26A students are provided with necessary supportive services. The goal was to encourage these students to stay in school, stay safe while in school, and successfully complete their education. Article 26A requires that at least one staff member in each school building be identified and trained as a resource person for Article 26A students, and that each district have a complaint resolution procedure to resolve complaints of alleged violations of Article 26A. We are required to add a new **Board policy 5455, *Students Who are Parents, Expectant Parents, or Victims of Domestic or Sexual Violence*** to ensure compliance with IL School Code Article 26A.

The ESS Law also amends the following existing policies:

4100 Staff Development

5010 Equal Educational Opportunities

5020 Harassment of Students Prohibited

5120 Residence

5200 Attendance and Truancy

5370 Suspensions and Expulsions

5450 Student Support Services

5600 Student Records

6380 Home and Hospital Instruction

These recommendations are attached for Board discussion and will be brought before the Board as an Action Item for approval in August. Please let me know if you have any questions concerning these recommendations.